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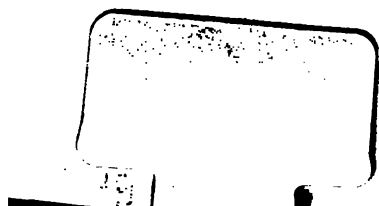
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E. Bluthar

GRACE AND REMEMBRANCE.

Poems

BY

G. GERARD.

"For you there's rosemary and rue."

"Grace and remembrance be to you."

Winter's Tale.

LONDON:
BOSWORTH & HARRISON, 215, REGENT ST.
1856.

LONDON :

G. J. PALMER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

O GIVE thyself the thanks, if aught in me
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight,
For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee
When thou thyself dost give invention light?
Be thou the tenth muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine that rhymers invoke;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight muse do please these curious days
The pain be mine, but thine be all the praise.
SHAKSPEARE'S XXXVIIITH SONNET.

POEMS.

TO

SHAKSPEARE.

I.

O SPIRIT ! looking thro' the clouds
The murky clouds of by-past time,—
What darkness wraps, what mystery shrouds
The golden hours that saw thy prime.

All others whom the deeds of fame
Have lifted to Olympic skies—
Whose course has purchased honour's name,
And drawn the wide world's wondering eyes ;

All these,—tho' haply far unmeet
To rank with thee in glory's roll,
Presented to our view, we greet
As long familiar to the soul.

But thou alone sublime and far
In thy serene unrivall'd height,
Art seen and welcomed as a star
Whose matchless radiance shames the night.

For in a region vague and charm'd
Thy wondrous presence mov'd unknown ;
The curious world for once disarm'd
Has left thy hidden life alone.

And well it is: for of that life
We would not if we might know more ;
The record of thy cares and strife
To us would seem forbidden lore.

No thought of years is link'd with thee,
But ever in a vig'rous prime,
We see thy ripe maturity
Defying all the shocks of time.

And sometimes in such pleasing dreams
As fancy shapes in idle days,
A fitting vision bursts and gleams
One moment on our dazzled gaze.

We see—yet half-concealed in shades
The dawning of a human face,
And ere the misty outline fades
Some features can the heart embrace ;—

An eye whose wondrous radiance shone
Observant thro' the deeds of men,
Then pierced where fancy's aery zone
Conceals its worlds from vulgar ken ;—

A brow upon whose ample space
Sweet thoughts and gentle walk'd at will,
Where clearest judgment held her place,
Yet link'd with loving mercy still ;—

A lip whose even lines confess'd
The calm decision of the soul,
Now curl'd by fancies unexpress'd,
And yielding now to mirth's control :—

All these and more our eyes behold
When precious hours with thee we spend,
Till by long converse waxing bold,
We dare to claim thee as a friend.

Then rest thee in thy lofty height,
O spirit! dimly seen but dear,—
We need not any proof of sight,
Who yet thy wondrous voice may hear.

II.*

WHAT omens mark'd that April morn
Which ushered in with flow'r and song,
And all the soft delights that throng
The footsteps of the blushing dawn,

A life which made the age sublime,
A rallying point to future days,
A beacon-fire whose wondrous blaze
Illumined all the waves of time:

* Shakspeare was born April 23rd, 1564, and died April 23rd,
1616.

A watchword to the human race,
An era in the nation's story,
A hostage from the hands of glory
Lent to the world a little space.

A life outflung upon the earth
Whose fragrance fill'd our common air,
To such a life sublime and rare
Sweet April ! did thine hours give birth.

O "well apparell'd" month ! (oft sung
By him who graced the world with thee),
Walking with bloom and minstrelsy
Thy lilac-scented groves among ;

Worthy of him thy dubious cheer
With glancing light and sparkling shower,
In whom combined with equal power
The genii of a smile and tear.

Worthy to lead thro' sun and shade
The rosy seasons' circling dance,
Worthy a higher meed perchance
But that thou hast thyself betray'd.

—What omens mark'd that April morn
Which prank'd itself in colours gay,
And in departing, stole away
A life that left the world forlorn?

III.

If one should look upon a band
Of village urchins at their play,
With noisy laughter hand in hand,
Observing all the rites of May;

'Twere hard to tell how wide might lie
The diverse paths which each should trace,
So like they seem to careless eye
In merry mood, in childish grace.

One day by day, his labour plies
Within the same unceasing round,
Unconscious of the world that lies
Beyond his hamlet's narrow bound.

Another on the distant main,
From port to port, and shore to shore
Sails to and fro in search of gain,
And slowly swells his scanty store.

While one perchance, whose birth was low,
Whom early care had taught to be
Familiar with the chilling woe
That haunts the steps of poverty;

Begins a new and vigorous race,
And pressing on, by dint of worth,
Wins for himself a noble place
Among the great ones of the earth.

And yet sometimes in after years
He turns him to his childhood's home,
And moves among his early peers
Forgetful that a change has come.

His old companions round him press,
They clasp his hand and kindred claim,
While aged grandsires love to bless
The ripened honours of his name.

Nor does he shrink with petty pride
From each advance ; his honest truth
Can never choose to set aside
The playmates of his earlier youth.

He walks among them—great indeed,
In wisdom and in worth a king,
But with a noble heart, and freed
From ev'ry base and sordid thing.

And such art thou ! a friend whom fame
Has never banished from our side,
To whom we dare to breathe the name
—Companion,—Counsellor,—and Guide.

IV.

SEE CORIOLANUS. ACT I. SCENE III.

Who saw thy childish steps pursuing
Across the clover-purpled mead,
From hedge to hedge white-blossomed,

The summer's painted fly, now viewing,
Where her light form rocked in fear
Hanging on a "cowslip's ear,"
Now high lifted o'er thy head,
Soaring with a passive joy
In the calm delicious air;
Then again with motion coy
Flitting slow, now here, now there,
Folding downy wings to steal
Into the balmy depths of roses
When the frolic wind uncloses
Every flow'ret's vermeil seal.

Not for thee the vain endeavour,
Not for thee in doubt to chase
Things inconstant flying ever,—
Thine the guerdon of the race:
Fame's eternal wreath is thine,
With whose fruits of autumn's growing,
Budding leaves of spring entwine,
Its perpetual vigour showing
Neither wasting nor decline.

V.*

AND thou hast mourn'd !—
O touching, tender thought, to bind
Us closer to the master mind !
Can it be true that sorrow dawn'd
On thee in any wise ?
Can it be true those eagle eyes
Which seem'd to pierce through distant space,
And worlds of fancy to embrace
As in a moment's glance,
Once rested with a strange surprise
Upon a death-seal'd face ?

Did the low cry of anguish break
From thy rent heart, for his dear sake
Who lay in silent trance ?
And didst thou clasp in speechless pain
The slumberer calm and cold,
And look thro' sorrow's blinding rain
Upon a hand thou ne'er again
In life should'st hold ?

* " Hamnet son of William Shakspeare was buried Aug. 11, 1596."

O tender thought !
Could Death into thy home be brought,
And could his silent footfall wend
About thy house, across the door,
Upon the stairs, along the floor,—
And none the chosen one defend ?
And ere his stealthy step passed out,
Was there no respite, no reprieve,—
Or did suspended hours of doubt
The credulous heart deceive ?

Perchance thine eye was first to trace
His “ pale flag’s ” ghastly sign
On that wan form of youthful grace
Which owed its life to thine :
Perchance thy wakeful ear descried
With what faint sound and low,
The gates of life were opened wide,
To let the spirit go :
And haply in that hour, thy breast—
(Oh shrine of ev’ry tender thought !)
Was the last couch thy darling press’d,
In death his last support !

How didst thou deal with Sorrow then,
 When she with thee was left alone,
When all the trite concerns of men,
 The petty cares that life must own
Were deem'd superfluous things?—
When Silence drooping mournful wings,
 Brooded above thy quiet home,
And from the doorway arched and low,
A funeral train went forth in woe,
And the day moved with footstep slow,
 As night would never come.

Alas ! the garish day betray'd
 Strange, vacant places here and there,
 A bed unpress'd, an empty chair,
Which darkness wrapp'd in shade.
Yet when the twilight fell across
 The empty floor, the empty heart,
 It touched with wilder start
 The hidden springs of grief,
 And roused from slumber dull and brief
The new-found sense of loss !

How often in thine after years,
 When lov'd memorials treasur'd up,

Showed thro' the tender haze of tears,
The drain'd and bitter cup,
Did the lorn heart revolve
In seasons blank and cold,
Such thoughts as only time can solve,
And only Heav'n unfold ?
Far off might once have seem'd, and dim
The " undiscovered " bliss,
Till faith drew nigh for love of him,
And spann'd the deep abyss.

And haply when thy hand pourtray'd
With cunning art
A mother's heart,*
In her extremity of pain,
A deeper sorrow was betray'd,†
A dearer grief made plain.

And thou hast rendered tribute meet
To his dear name,—
No child we greet
Whom thy rich fancy lov'd to frame,

* Constance, in ' King John.'

† " I cannot but remember such things were

That were most precious to me." *Macduff.*

VII.

THY notes fall from thee like the nightingale's,
When sitting half-unseen
Within her leafy screen,
To the hush'd night she breathes her amorous tales.

She needs no rudiments of art to teach
Her wild impassioned lay ;
The notes that ravish May
With thrilling music are her native speech.

So when thy soul would breathe its glowing thought
Transmuted into song,
Thy passion flows along
In gushing waves of melody untaught.

VIII.

WHERE some sweet lake in liquid silver flows
Beneath the shadow of surrounding hills,
In whose calm depths the laughing mountain rills
Forget their clamorous mirth, and find repose,—

We see reflected in their colours true
Each point and feature of the sylvan scene,
The grassy knoll, the woodland belt of green,
The quivering aspen, and the sombre yew ;
And deeper yet in dreamy lines pourtray'd
The distant mountain, and the fleeting cloud :—
So in thy works which thousand objects crowd
All stand distinct in life-like hues display'd,
And nature bends above thy copy fair,
Transported to behold her perfect image there.

IX.

EARTH clasps the relics of her prime,
Colossal forms that mock decay,
The footprints of an earlier time,
The wrecks of ages past away ;

The vestige of a giant brood
That ere a single beam had cross'd
The darkness of the Stygian flood,
Upon its shoreless waters toss'd.

Vague records of the Past ! With these
A thousand subtil fancies sport,
And fashion in unfathomed seas
The monsters of a brooding thought.

And we who look around, and scan
The marks of later ages fled,
Discern on all the life of man
The traces of a giant's tread.

Earth's mighty sons indeed depart,
But leave immortal wrecks behind ;
In deep recesses of the heart
Their noblest relics rest enshrined.

X.

AND has our age decay'd in worth,
Or Time grown charier of his gifts,
That still the tide of progress drifts
Across the nations of the earth,

Yet from its waves ascending higher,
 No Shakspeare greets the world again,
 To grasp the thousand thoughts of men
And clothe them in a garb of fire ?

O mighty Bard and mightier Sage !
 Thy words are fresh as in their prime,
 They were not narrowed to a time,
Nor bounded by a single age.

And yet the time was worthy thee,
 An era seal'd with martyr's blood,
 An age whose ripening strength withstood
The specious claims of sophistry.

When darkest storms had blown away,
 And fairer skies appeared again,*
 While blossoms nurtured by the rain
Sprang up and hail'd the genial day,

In such an hour was drawn the prize ;
 And well may Time have niggard grown,
 Since in a single gift was thrown
The capital of centuries !

* 1564.

XI.

NATURE is gentle in her wildest mood,
And on her sternest features wears a grace,
In rock-bound glen and mountain solitude
The creeping ivy and the rose embrace ;
While from the startling summit of a crag
Whose height o'erleaps the torrent's sullen roar,
Some fairy blossom waves her pendant flag,
And moss and lichen spread their bounteous store.
So thou hast ever blended gentle thought,
And softer passions with sublimest themes,
And thy luxuriant fancies twine and sport
About the wild creations of thy dreams ;
Nor hast thou left one drear and rugged place
Unclothed with beauty, unadorn'd with grace.

XII.

On thy page, where'er we turn,
Glowing thoughts and fancies burn,
Yet conceal'd from careless eye
Sumless stores of treasure lie ;

They who seek with loving mind
Many a precious thing shall find,
For thy princely bounties flow
Freely, whether priz'd or no :
As in some sequestered spot
Which the sunbeam reaches not,
In the silent dewy grass,
Where no foot of man may pass,
Will the sweet earth weave unseen
All her fresh spring garb of green,
Reckless whether human eye
Shall the fragrant store descry,
Happy that the birds of air
Chaunt their sweetest wood-notes there.

XIII.

"My friend and I are one."

Sonnets.

THOU hadst a friend : some favoured heart
Could freely lean on thine,—
O precious love that was embalmed
Within so rich a shrine !

Which linked with all the tenderness
A woman's soul can know,
The frank and unsuspecting faith
That manly hearts bestow :

A love which blessed when thou wert gone,*
As verdant banks betray
Long afterwards the silent course
Of waters pass'd away.

XIV.

AGE never laid his withering hand on thee,†
Nor quench'd thy spirit thro' declining hours,
But in thy full maturity,
The rich perfection of thy matchless powers,
Didst thou submit
To death, and quit
This earth that claim'd thee for awhile ;

* "Your monument shall be my gentle verse
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read."

Shakspeare's Sonnets (81).

† Shakspeare died at the age of 52, upon his birthday.

And that inconstant April day
That had beheld thine earliest smile,
Look'd on thy lifeless clay.
For thou didst fall,
As a ripe fruit is pluck'd away,
That hangs upon a sunny wall,
Without one trace of sad decay.
But seasons could not measure thee,
And Time himself is in arrears,
Thy portion of a century
Will laugh to scorn a thousand years.
The mountain-top is hardly won
Thro' patient labour, toilsome might,
But ere a few brief moments run,
The eagle darting to the sun,
Has gain'd her eyrie's height.

XV.

THE world has asked and asked again
From whence the varied streams could flow
Of thy deep lore : yet well we know
Where summer birds their notes obtain.

And did not He who fram'd their bower,
 (Theme of their carol, and its source,)
 Endue thee with such "large discourse,"
Such subtil skill, such matchless power?

He saw when first thy course began,
 How that majestic intellect
 Should in its lucid depths reflect
The image and the life of man.

O perfect power! O skill refin'd!
 If such the work, how wise the hand!
 Inscrutable the God that plann'd
The living soul, the deathless mind.

XVI.

EXTINCT thy race: thy glorious name
 Was never pass'd from sire to son,*
Nor of thy goodly stock remains
 One scion,—lest with grief and shame

* Shakspeare's only son died 20 years before his father at the age of eleven. His grand-daughter Lady Barnard was the last of the family.

We might behold in meaner veins
Thy princely blood compelled to run ;
And lest perchance we mourn'd to trace
Thy features in a vacant face,
Or kindled with indignant flame,
To hear some churlish spirit claim
His glorious parentage,
While thy dear name remain'd alone
An empty sound, a gilded cage,
From which the birds had flown.

XVII.

WITH fairest flowers the year is ushered in ;
But day by day on silent pinions borne,
Her vestal robes a deepening colour win,
And livelier hues her pallid cheek adorn.
The golden stars that scent the vernal air
Displace the dewdrop of the winter snows,
Then pale again, as summer's breath lays bare
The blushing glories of the crimson rose.
And thy first flowers were fair,—but oh, less bright
Than these full blossoms of thine after years,

They did but yield a promise of delight,
A dawn of beauty seen thro' morning tears ;
While now to thee advancing seasons bring
The strength of summer and the sweets of spring.

XVIII.

No worm destroyed, no blight decayed,
The tree which planted by his hand *
Might yet have lingered in the land
With kindly fruit or grateful shade :

Nor did it fall thro' adverse wind,
But in its strength and beauty failed,
By sacrilegious hands assailed,
And blighted by a narrow mind.

* The Rev. Mr. Gastrell purchased Shakspeare's house called "New Place" in the last century. Being assessed as he thought too highly for a house in which he only resided occasionally, he threw down the building,—having *previously* cut down the mulberry-tree planted by the poet, in order to avoid the trouble of showing it to strangers.

O ruthless deed ! oh heart unjust !
O churlish soul devoid of shame,
Content to win an evil fame
By selfish wrong and broken trust !

Could'st thou indeed beneath his roof
Have breath'd the air he breathed, yet feel
No " visitings compunctious " steal
Upon thy soul with stern reproof ?

Not that we need traditions dim,
Or relics of his outer life ;—
Ah no ! the world itself is rife
For us with monuments of him.

XIX.

I MEET with sorrow on her way,
And tremble lest she pause to take
A lodging in my breast, and make
Her dwelling there for many a day.

Ah ! thou hast known the phantom throng
 Of terrors vague and undefin'd,
 Which brooding in thy mighty mind,
 Have stirr'd its sweetest flights of song.

And thou hast track'd the dreary course
 Of woe through all vicissitudes,
 Thro' silent and ungentle moods,
 Thro' morbid pain, and wild remorse ;

Thro' Hope and Fear's alternate strife,
 Thro' burning grief* and drowning tears,
 Till ev'ry token disappears
 In that dumb woe † which quenches life.

Yet peace ! the thorns are pluck'd away
 That once might vex that noble heart,
 Thou canst not sorrow where thou art,
 Affliction combats not with clay.

* *Hermione*.—I have

That honourable grief lodged here which burns
 Worse than tears drown." *Winter's Tale*.

† "The grief that does not speak
 Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break." *Macbeth*.

XX.

THE pale moon flies before the dawn,
The stars die out from south to north,
And flinging back the gates of morn,
The giant sun comes forth.

Rejoicing in his strength, he climbs
His pathway through the vaulted skies,
While the glad earth sends up betimes
Her steaming sacrifice.

And thus when streaks of silver rimm'd
The dusk before the coming morn,
Thy sudden splendour broke and dimm'd
The pale moon's crystal horn.

For he who sang enchanted lays,
Of warrior dame and faery knight,*
Withdrew before thy burning rays
His sweet but fainter light.

* Spenser died in 1598, when Shakspeare was already the author of Hamlet, &c., &c.

And as thy glory mounted higher,
And poured its golden tides below,
It quench'd each lesser spark of fire
That darker hours might show.

They shine no more as erst they did,
And yet the heav'n is spangled o'er :
'Tis only when thy light is hid,
We see them as before.

XXI.

If other worlds and other suns
That circle in perpetual space,
Are dwellings of a diverse race,—
(For so the creed of science runs)

Then haply, yonder speck above
That trembles into beauty now,
May hold a Shakspeare great as thou,
The centre of a people's love.

But what to me tho' rolling hours
Revisit life in other stars,
What care I for a race in Mars
That cannot sympathize with ours?

XXII.

CAN there be one whose heart has caught
No thrill of rapture from thy page,
To whom thy voice has never brought
A single joy in youth or age?

Who seeking with a morbid thirst
For novel things of poorer worth,
Neglected leaves the best and first,
And barter gems for clods of earth.

And wherefore? Is the starry fire
A stranger to th' enamoured gaze?
Do we behold the moon, and tire
Of her pure beams, her chastened rays?

Not so : the dearest things on earth,
Are those loved longest, earliest known ;
'Tis only those of deepest worth
That pall not when familiar grown.

XXIII.

THE earth is fair indeed : but we
Would look upon her face with thee.
Go forth with us,—and while at eve
We linger by the babbling stream
In the lone dell, thy hand shall weave
The summer's sweetest dream :
And ev'ry knotted oak and thorn,
And ev'ry foxglove's spotted bell,
And daisy-cups that close till morn,
Their whispered tale shall tell.
And elfin forms shall glide and glance
Amongst the trailing boughs of green,
Where singing lullabies they dance
About their faery Queen.

And as they rest
The solemn bird
Delicious notes of woe repeating,
From passionate grief to gladness fleeting,
In the wild pause is heard.
Then as her music fades away,
And shadows thick'ning in the rear of day
Droop sadly o'er earth's quiet breast,
We hear again their roundelay ;
And ever and anon
The flow'rs are folded, and the stream runs on.
—But the night hies. Away to bed,
One moment linger,—Ah ! the dream is fled.

XXIV.

ONCE more we meet
Beside the winter fire awhile,
And in discourse with thee beguile
The lonely hours, that else unmark'd would fleet,

Or measured only by the moan
Of winds that at the casement beat,
Or by the drowsy undertone
Of falling rain and sleet.

Hark how the owl begins to shout
His frantic homage to the night,
But we forget the moments' flight,
And all the world without.
Where thy sweet fancy loves to guide,
"Shut up in measureless content,"
We wander at thy side,
Beholding in Arcadian trance
Green slopes where shepherds pipe and dance,
The hedges rich with bloom and scent,
The white flocks lying on the hills,
The breezy shadows falling sweet
On beds of thyme, the laughing rills,
The valleys thick with golden wheat
That wears its harvest smile.
Or in that lone enchanted isle
With sounds unearthly ringing,*
We hear the plaintive singing.

* See *Tempest*, Act I. Scene 1.

At which the wild waves hush their troubled roar
 Upon the desolate shore :—
Or listening to Illyrian airs,*
Catch the feigned tale in which love dares
 To vent its patient sorrow.—
But the light fails, the oil runs low,
The embers blacken ; let us go,
Good night 'tis nearly morrow.

XXV.

Who saw that stately brow when Death
 Had left his kisses there,
And stifled with his noxious breath
 Life's pure and wholesome air ;

When that majestic form reposed
 Within its narrow bed,
And from those eyes in slumber closed
 The spirit's light had fled ?

* See Twelfth Night, Act II. Scene 4.

What loving looks were thither cast,
What whispers stirr'd the gloom,
As steps with noiseless motion pass'd
About the darkened room ?

And oh ! what tender hand might strew
The flowers of April there,
The nodding violet drenched with dew,
The primrose wan and fair,

Which deck'd long since the laughing earth
And grac'd a brighter year ;—
Alas ! that they which hail'd thy birth,
Must weep upon thy bier !

XXVI.

IN yonder walls, where first the name
Above his infant form was breath'd,
Which living he enriched with fame,
And dying to a world bequeath'd,

He sleeps the dreamless sleep of death :
And loud above his narrow bier
The voice of prayer ascends, the breath
Of praise in music lingers near.

Without, the golden grasses gleam,
Along the slopes the shadows play,
And with a languid course the stream
Drops downward thro' the scented hay.

There sleep ! Tho' lesser spirits claim
A prouder sepulture than thine,
These walls that echoed first thy name
Are worthiest to enfold thy shrine.

XXVII.

No farewell note my song shall mar,
No parting cadence sink and swell
With sad delay, for some there are
To whom we never bid farewell.

'They pass, yet scarcely seem apart,
Nor can remorseless Time impair
The perfect fellowship of heart
Which once and evermore we share.

O fly forebodings dark and vain !
O baseless visions swift descend !
And thou from first to last remain
A present soul, a living friend.

XXVIII.

THY hand alone
Could sweep the deepest chords of woe ;
And love resolved her fullest tone
From thy dear lips should flow.

No other heart
Could yield her such a wide domain,
No other bosom bear the smart
Of such majestic pain.

Thy tenderness
Thrilled through the music of thy voice,
And uttered in no wild excess
Its self-forgetting choice.*
Love oft must dwell
With passions of a meaner tone ;
But thou didst every guest expel,
That she might reign alone.

XXIX.

AND will my notes unheeded ring,
Nor in a single breast awake
One kindred echo for the sake
Of him who touched the string ?
Yet let them breathe their music out,
However faint the strain may prove,
The heart delights to set its love
Beyond the reach of doubt.

* "I love you so
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe."—*Sonnet* 71.

And I would speak tho' half in fear,
To thee in fullest fame enthroned,
The homage which my heart has owned
Thro' many a silent year.

I know not why I dare to make
Thy name the burden of my song ;
If it be pride,—forgive the wrong,
If love,—the offering take.

XXX.

NOR have I shaped my speech in vain,
Since love must surely live in words,
Not ripen like the ungarnered grain,
To strew the sod or feed the birds.

Tho' mean my verse, and rudely plann'd,
Unmeet to hold a theme so high,
'Tis fashioned with a loyal hand
To shelter love, lest love should die.

The heart secures her ripening store
While smiling plenty crowns the year,
That when her harvests yield no more,
The produce of the past may cheer.

TO A DAY.

DAY, bright day!

Whither away?

Though thou be made for toil and care.

Yet night is dark, and thou art fair,

Hear not her envious call :

Rest thee a few short hours,

Then if thou must fade, fade and fall

With thine own flowers !

Linger yet !

Can I forget

What goodly store of true delight

Came to me with the dawn of light ?

I have not told it o'er ;
O be content to tarry,
The burden of my joys is more
Than thou canst carry.

Linger yet !
And I will set
Thy name among the holidays,
And ev'ry year shall hear thy praise,
With ev'ry glad return ;
And when I tell thy story,
The watch-fires of my heart will burn
To vaunt thy glory.

As a dream
Thine hours will seem
When the swift night has floated by,
And when the morn has come—then I
Must call thee—yesterday !
O, if thou could'st but linger :
Alas ! the dial chides thy stay
With silent finger !

Day! bright day!

Then haste away;

Since sweetest things must sometime end,

Yet turn and say farewell, my friend,

For I have lov'd thee dearly;

Then speed thy parting wing,

Lest thou should'st see my pilfering,

And know that I have left thee merely

A naked thing!

ISABEL.

ON such a night long years ago,
When shades of twilight fell,
In careless talk beside the fire
I sate with Isabel.

The clouds were drifting o'er the sky,
The gust blew wild and free,
The white owl shouted to the moon
From out the holly tree.

Before the hearth we sate and gaz'd
Upon the embers' glow,
And mark'd the mouldering ruins fall,
The quaint shapes come and go.

Then said I sadly, " Ever thus
My visions melt away,
And thus thro' life shall I behold
My fairest hopes decay."

She look'd into the glimmering fire,
Her voice was faint and low,
Yet this she spake, " Some joys there are
Which cannot fail we know :

" Howe'er our earth-enkindled flames
Die out in ashes gray,
The light which God has fix'd in heaven
Can never fade away."

Next morn I parted from my home,
To wander thro' the world,
In many a wild and distant spot
My tent was spread and furl'd.

I saw the busy life of men,
Beheld their strife and care,
I trod the pathless waste, and found
My bitterest foeman there.

The restless fires of youth died out,
 Its freshest prime was o'er,
An older and a wiser man,
 I sought my father's door.

And once again when years were past,
 And shades of twilight fell,
In my old home beside the hearth
 I sate with Isabel.

A thousand fancies fill'd my breast,
 From strange sweet mem'ries born,
A blessed future seem'd about
 Upon my life to dawn.

From distant chambers came the sound
 Of mirth and jest and song,
But by the fire in idleness,
 I sate and pondered long.

And in the faint and flickering light
 My sweet companion seem'd
Only that well-remembered form
 Of which I long had dream'd.

I look'd into the glimmering fire,
A bright flame sparkled out,
Glared on the walls, and madly chased
The shadows all about.

Then said I softly, " Isabel,
My life was full of shade,
Until a ray as bright as this
Upon its darkness play'd."

She turn'd her wond'ring eyes to me,
She knew not what to speak,
And yet a deeper crimson burn'd
Upon her lip and cheek.

She read my meaning, and her soul
That moment walk'd with mine,
It was an interchange of heart,
That ask'd not outward sign.

No words we spake ; the hours went by,
The embers dropp'd away,
And one by one the sparks died out
Upon the ashes gray.

And one by one from out my breast
Each vain foreboding fell,
The smouldering sorrows of the past
Had heard their curfew-knell.

A Hand unseen through all my life
Diffus'd the light of day,
And gave a gentle guide to cheer
And bless me on the way.

—That fair, sweet guide is in her grave,
The violets nod above :
Name her not now,—she was my first
My last, my only love.

SUNSET.

DECEMBER 31ST, 1854.

GRANDLY does the year go down,

Royally he sinks to rest,

Like a hero of renown

Folded in his martial vest.

Crimson pall and purple shroud

O'er the face of heav'n are spread,

And each tempest-laden cloud

Gathers to his dying bed.

Passing year ! my heart has sorrow,
Thinking that we twain must sever,
Thinking that the dawn of morrow
Will behold thee past for ever.

Many a death-tale has been spoken
In thy seasons' course I know,
Many a spirit has been broken,
Many a gallant head laid low.

Voices loud of bitter wailing
Thro' our island home have rung,
And by hearts with sorrow failing
Dirges for the dead were sung.

Yet there shone amid thy showers
Precious gleams of golden light,
Morning with her blushing flowers
Followed ev'ry rainy night.

Can we doubt of future blessing
Tho' a dark horizon lowers,
Are not winter's rain-drops dressing
All the sleeping earth with flowers ?

Pass then to thy grave in splendour,
Stately old year lov'd and true,
Only time can make us render
Equal homage to the new.

GUESTS.



I HAD a joy,—
Yet when she seem'd most fair and meek,
I lost her. When I went to seek,
I found her shy and coy ;
In vain I strove to lure her back,
In vain I toil'd and pin'd,
And tho' I followed in her track,
She left me still behind.
Ah well a day !
We two were gay,
I did but use a vaunting tone,
A boastful word I chanc'd to say,
And she was gone !

While her I sought,
Grief met me wandering desolate,
And when she spied my friendless state,
She cut my labours short,
And bade me talk with her awhile,
And since my guest was flown,
She would my vacant hours beguile
And dwell with me alone.

Ah ! foolish heart
Ensnared by art,
How could'st thou so unstable be,
To suffer grief to have a part
In thine and thee ?

Grief had her tether,
And then she rul'd with iron thong,
But when she seem'd most loud and strong,
I lost her altogether :
And as I trembling stood in fear
Lest she should come once more,
I almost held my breath to hear
Joy knocking at the door.—
Ah ! sweetest guest,
Come in and rest,

Now will I hold thee doubly dear,—
So when my humble suit I press'd
She turn'd in here.

And thus again
I have her to abide with me,
And I will use her royally
That she may long remain ;
And lest once more she say Farewell,
I'll serve her with my best,
That she may be content to dwell
My welcome willing guest.
Ah ! happy day
As sweet as May,
When back to me her footsteps came,
Whatever else has pass'd away,
She's still the same.

THE timid culver fears abroad to fly,
When clouds are gathering in the distant west,
Nor dares she trust the promise of the sky,
Though all the nearer heav'n in smiles be
drest ;

The very sunshine wears a tinge of gloom,
Presaging fancies mar her wonted cheer,
Nor can the balmy gale or summer bloom
Beguile her bosom of unrest and fear.

And I, to whom thy presence else might bring
A cloudless atmosphere of tranquil joy,
Dare not let loose my pleasure on the wing,
For dread of that which must my bliss destroy,
And haunted only by its coming knell,
Confound all music in that word,—Farewell.

i

FROM Winter's grasp unloosed, the laughing brooks
Leap into light, and thread their devious way
Where purple violets haunt the mossy nooks,
And green buds open to the genial day ;
With sounds of life the leafless thicket stirs,
The swallow skims along the distant lea,
The lark ascends ;—a thousand harbingers
Announce the spring,—but who shall herald thee ?
Before thy coming feet no flowers unfold,
No breezes whisper of thy whereabouts,
Yet does my heart a secret presage hold
Which fills her fancy, and forbids her doubt,
And truer far than bird or flower can be,
Her silent index points, and points to thee.

BEAT not so proudly heart, lest thou shouldst sink
Too soon with sorrow ; when unnatural bloom
Flushes the cheek, the passer-by will think
Of pining sickness or an early tomb.
And so when April skies are bright at dawn,
When ev'ry dewdrop smiles along the plain,
Ere long the sunlight withers from the morn,
And all the heav'ns are overcast again.
So yonder rose by ev'ry breeze caress'd,
That flaunts her beauty in the eye of day,
Hides in the foldings of her crimson vest
The silent tokens of her sure decay.
Ah ! then presumptuous heart, thy pride restrain,
Since beauty, skies and flowers may smile in vain.

THE blackbird sings ; the thorn is drest
In freshest buds of tender green,
And violets blushing to be seen
Fling odours on the wanton west.

Alone among the branches bare,
He chaunts his meditative song,
While far and near a busy throng
Are warbling to the vernal air.

As sweetly as in days of yore
His clear melodious music sings,
And sights and sounds of other springs
Come back upon my heart once more.

I see again the garden-walk,
 The quaint-shap'd beds, the mossy lawn,
 The weeping birch, the stunted thorn,
 The arbour where we sate to talk ;

The dial numbering golden hours,
 The crevice whence I pluck'd the weed,
 The silent pool with rush and reed,
 The dazzling knots of early flowers.

And dearer far than these I cling
 To each remembered form and face
 That made a sunshine in the place
 And sweetened ev'ry common thing.

Blithe bird, sing on ! unmarr'd thy lay
 By change or care's discordant notes,
 Thy liquid song as calmly floats
 From bloomy bough or leafless spray.

MOUNTAIN AIR.

WHEN o'er the heather-purpled moors
The fresh'ning gales of morning fly,
Their whispered sweetness half allures
My spirit into extasy.

Is there no pleasure at the heart,
No secret joy imprison'd there ?
Or can these happy fancies start
At the light breath of mountain air ?

'Tis even so ; yet deep within
Whatever plants of joy remain,
Awakened by the touch, begin
To quicken into life again.

And so the past and present blend
In one pervading thought of bliss,
And former hours of sunshine lend
Their greenness and their bloom to this.

Ah ! linger sense as sweet as strange,
Nor with the passing moment fly,
For swifter than the breezes change,
The heart's inconstant raptures die.

THE OLD MANOR HOUSE.



If you would hear the story of my life,
Sit down upon this stone, and rest awhile.
There, in the shadow of the distant wood
That darkens half the outline of the hill,
Stands the old manor-house ; its gabled ends
Facing the sunrise. In my boyish days
It stood deserted and untenanted,
Thro' fault of late possessors then deceas'd.
The roses clambered o'er the broken porch,
And chok'd the entrance ; on the silent pool
The weeds grew thick, and briars and nettles crept
About the tangled borders, here and there

A plot of verdure or a tuft of flowers
Mocking the dreary wildness of the scene.

Among the ivy plants, the moping owl
Had found a haunt, and in the reedy grass
The plover couched,—her solitary cry
All that might startle silence,—save when there,
A truant loitering on his way to school,
I paus'd awhile to gather rosy nuts,
Or pluck the ripening berries.

Often too,
It was my joy to lie with book in hand,
Under the spreading trees and gaze on heav'n
Thro' the dark leaves that trembled overhead
In endless music, drinking in the while
The balmy freshness of the summer's morn,
And marking how the tawny-throated bird
Perched far above me on a leafy spray,
Was pouring out his gladness.

Thus my days
Flew by with song and sunshine, till arrived
The time when I must leave my father's house,
And seek my fortune in the world alone.
Then in the noisy city's crowded streets
I made my dwelling, toil'd and studied there

'Thro' many a year, the busy cares of life
Driving all childhood's lessons from my breast,
And deadening softer thoughts.

Long afterwards,
With gay companions of my careless youth,
I sought my former home—alas ! how changed !
No trace of kindred, save the mournful lines
Upon the churchyard stones,—my father there,
• Mother and sister laid in one sad grave ;
And I alone on earth ! chill'd more than cheered
By the discordant voice of sympathy
From uncongenial spirits, fain to laugh
With them, and mock my sorrow, thinking thus
To hide its bitterness, and stretch a veil
Above the dreary vacancy that yawn'd
For ever in my life.

One day it chanc'd,
In-musing idleness, I stray'd again
As oft of old, toward the manor house ;
I sought its groves, and on a turfy bank
Rested awhile. Within my hand I held
An open book, and as I read of one
Whose angel face made sunshine in the shade,
And robb'd the forest monarch of his pride,

I rais'd my eyes, for in that lonely place
Mine ear had caught a sound ; in truth, a foot
Light as a zephyr, press'd the mossy sward,
And in the shadow of the vaulted trees
A fairy figure stood. A form it was
Of such bewildering beauty, that it seem'd
Only the vague ideal of my dreams
That gaz'd upon me. Round her gentle face,
The shadow'd sunlight of her golden hair
Fell in intense luxuriance ; from her brow,
(Twin'd there in sport,) a wreath of ivy hung,
And in her hand, with foxgloves tall, she bore
Green tresses of the fern and harebells blue.

Thus thro' the garden came she, till arriv'd
In that lone nook where I was wont to rest,
Me she espied, and like a startled fawn
That would be gone, yet knows not where to flee,
Paus'd for a moment, then with hastier foot,
Sought the deep covert of the wood again.

Yet other visions bless'd me ; for her sire
Claim'd as his kinsman one among my friends,
And for his sake, a welcome greeted me,
Whene'er I wandered to the manor house.
There oft we met, a gay and merry band

At old Sir Rowland's hospitable board,
Yet seldom saw his daughter ; she the while
Sequestered sweetly mid her bees and flowers
Shrank from our noisy mirth.

One morn we walk'd
Upon the terrace at the sunny south,
Talking of years gone by : the quiet fish
Were resting in the pool, the birds were still,
And in the noontide heat, the junipers
Cast a small shadow on the shaven turf,
There paced we long, until our host at last
Guiding our footsteps, turn'd and let us forth
Into the pleasant garden ; where bright knots
Of autumn flowers in all their gayest prime
Slept in the sunshine, and the languid breath,
Of a mild south wind, creeping o'er them, brought
A world of sweetness ; but a fairer sight
Than flow'r or sunshine cross'd my vision then,
For Lilian came to meet us, and with her
We sate and talked, until the white-faced moon
Look'd dimly out in heaven. A thousand themes
Arose to challenge fancy, many a jest
Or sharp retort provok'd our passing mirth.
From point to point the dial's shadow crept,

And still we talk'd, till higher themes gave place
To grave discussion and mysterious thought :
We spoke of man,—the universe,—the host
Of countless stars, if tenanted or no,
Of revelation and the book of God ;
Till as we question'd of such subjects high,
Horatio laugh'd and mock'd us with a jest.

I glanc'd at Lilian then : the sudden light
Flash'd to her eye, and all her cheek's sweet bloom
Burn'd in a crimson flush that died away
As from her lips the half unwilling words
Fill'd all the air with music : looking down
Thro' lashes moistened with a single tear,
She uttered mild rebuke, yet with such air
Of quiet grace and solemn earnestness,
As check'd his mirth at once, and brought a glow
Of deeper colour to his sunburnt cheek.

And as I heard her words—oh ! then the waves
That sway'd so wildly in my restless heart
Rose in a sudden tumult to the height
Of that spring-tide which comes but once in life,
And drenching all the landmarks of the past,
Sank into mute subjection, as the sea
Sinks at the silent glances of the moon.

And from that hour I lov'd her, from that hour
The yearnings of my lonely heart found vent,
And Lilian was their theme ; the heavy care
Which like a cloud had hung about my life
Melted before the sunshine of her glance,
Dissolv'd in sweetest tears, such tears as come
In precious moments when the heart is full
With joy and overflows. She taught my soul
Its sweetest lessons, taught me where to cast
My grief and burden, and I bless the words
That led a humbled spirit to the Cross
To seek deliverance.

Little more remains

Of my brief story : Lilian was my bride.
Thro' the green alley of those branching limes
We walk'd together, while the bells rang loud
Their noisy peal of joy. Alas ! alas !
Would that my tale were ended, or that here
I could forget what follows ! four blest years
She was my sweet companion, who adorn'd
My daily path with flow'rs, the gracious friend
Who shar'd and sooth'd my sorrows, gave to joy
A double value.—Do not blame these tears,
For though long years have pass'd since Lilian
stood

Before me in her beauty, yet that form
Is ever present, and the breath of flowers,
A bird's low ditty, or the hum of bees,
The odorous south-wind, or the flush of dawn,
Or the pure silent moonlight, wakens up
Each tender memory of that bygone time
When the sweet face which haunts my vision yet,
Was not a shadow.

Yonder turn, and mark
The grave that holds my treasure ; lovingly
Green plants and fragrant things have crept about
To cheer its gloom,—most fitting types of her
Whose young life withered in its early spring,
Shed beauty round it,—and more blessed pledge
Of those unsullied resurrection robes
In which her spirit shall be cloth'd again.

THE heart's deep joy is seldom stirr'd,
Yet with a touch it overflows ;
A gentle breath, a passing word,
Which falls unmark'd on careless ears,
May break the gathering frost of years,
And from the fountain's still repose
 Evoke delicious tears.

We know not to what gale of spring
The woodland-haunting violet
Her dearest charm may choose to fling,
When blossoms flaunt on stem and tree ;
Nor can the heart prophetic see
What touch shall thrill its depths, and set
 Their prison'd sweetness free.

In orchard ripe, in garden fair,
The year her later chaplet weaves,
And rosy clusters here and there
Look blushing thro' the dewy leaves.

Is this the fruit of vernal flowers
That fluttered on a leafless spray,
And nurs'd by April's smiles and showers
Flung odours on the breeze of May ?

Then let the young heart cherish still
The hopes that lend their hues to life,
The early dreams that nerve the will
To challenge and to brave the strife.

What if to some their bloom appears
 Fantastic or devoid of truth,
Who knows what fruits of after-years
 May slumber in those buds of youth ?

Oh happy hour ! oh moment blest !
 When toil and doubt and watching past,
Some darling fancy of the breast
 Becomes a waking bliss at last.

Not vainly does the child foreshew
 The tokens of his after-course ;
Tho' calmly now the waters flow,
 What hand may stem the torrent's force ?

If lighter shades of sorrow steal
Sometimes across my musing heart,
'Tis haply when I sigh to feel
How much of life is liv'd apart.

How many of thy precious hours
Which might have scattered good around,
Are wasting like the Alpine flowers
Their sweetness on a barren ground.

So brief is life—I scarce can choose
In dearest solitude to be,
Remembering what the heart must lose
By ev'ry hour away from thee.

TONES OF THE NIGHT.

THE night is beautiful, and blest with stars,
For like a bride adorn'd for nuptial hour,
She puts on all her jewels.—Come thou forth,
The air is balmy and the grass is sweet,
And in yon grove I hear a nightingale
Flooding the vale with music. Dost thou mark
What secret passion thrills through all her song?
She is no common warbler; she has learn'd
Strange and high things in these lone communings
With Nature. In the dusky hours of night
All other creatures rest, and lay aside

Their pipe and song, but she as one who feels
Her bosom burning with unuttered thoughts,
Rises and leaves her couch, and in the ear
Of patient darkness pours her music forth :
It matters not if men will hear, or no ;
She does not cease her strain ; she is content
With these her silent auditors,—the woods,
The sleeping lilies, and the bloomy thorn ;
To these she sings, and higher yet, her voice
Impassioned now, seems wafted to the skies,
Like a bright rocket piercing heavenward,
And dying there.—She ceases, and the night
Resumes its loneliness. How wildly falls
The silence after song !

Yea, but mine ears
Have parted not with that sweet music yet ;
I feel it humming round me. I could weep
Poor bird ! to hear her chaunt her mournful tale
In such melodious language, and no voice
Respond to its sad murmurs.

Yet perchance
This quiet lamb that nestles in the grass

Fragrant with meadow-sweet, has heard the strain,
Nature is full of melody, and these
Dumb creatures, in themselves unmusical,
May gather joy from concord of sweet sounds,
More than we haply deem.

If it be so,
She has not sung in vain.—How bright the stars
Shine forth to night !

And mark the tardy moon
Slow rising from behind the orchard trees
Shows her fair crescent. 'Tis a night methinks
Burdened with beauty. How yon silver birch
With all her drooping tresses, seems to grow
Out of the darkness, and in graceful lines
Traces her form upon the tranquil sky.

See glowworms wander on this turfy bank ;
Stay, let me look on one, what brilliant light
From this frail form emits its emerald hue.
It is a wondrous creature. I have thought
Sometimes that fortitude in spirits meek
Was like the glowworm's spark, which shines by
night,

And comes not till 'tis needed, for in hours
Of sunshine gladness we may scarcely guess
Its undiscern'd existence.

Let us pause
Awhile upon this mossy seat, until
The moon goes down. This silent eve methinks,
After the heat and burden of the day,
Is sweet as waters to a thirsty soul.

'Tis so to me,—for oft I know not why,
My spirit feels oppressed by nature's mirth,
And saddened by her beauty. In such hours,
Will memory visit us with keenest pangs.

It is the tide of summer joy that wafts
Into thy heart the shipwrecks of the past ;
The languid waves upcast the tempest's spoils,
When its blind rage is o'er, and morbid thought,
A lonely wrecker prowling on the coast
Of life's wide ocean, grasps the drifted spars,
And takes them for its prey.

What cry was that ?
The distant waterfowl among the reeds.
How tranquilly the ripples rise and fall
Here in this shady nook ; so calm they are,
That Hesper sends his trailing beams across
From yonder shore.

Listen ! I love the sound
Of dreamy drones that fly above our head
In the still evening air. It is a note
So full and deep, it haunts one like the knell
That tolls the hours of darkness, when we lie
Awake, and count their chiming.

Yes, or falls
As thro' the dim and vaulted aisle the swell
Of a full organ's tone.—The moon is down.
Come, we will wander homewards.

TWILIGHT SHADOWS.



THE twilight falls among the hills,
The blue mist creeps from stone to stone,
And in the rain-wash'd copse alone
His evening song the blackbird trills.

He sits upon the hawthorn bough,
The hawthorn bough whose reddening leaves
Droop sadly round the yellow sheaves
That crown the wood-girt upland now.

The sky grows dimmer ; one by one
The stars peer out and hide again,
The hurrying clouds are black with rain,
That gathered round the setting sun.

The fitful blast springs up and whirls
The dead leaves round me as I tread,
And leaping o'er its rocky bed
The moaning streamlet scatters pearls.

The tree-tops bend their crests forlorn,
As if they shook with sudden chill,
While sweeping o'er them from the hill
The mad gust laughs their pride to scorn.

A sadness creeps about my heart,
A sadness vague and undefin'd,
I tremble with the trembling wind,
And at the rustling branches start.

Cold tear-drops steal adown my cheek,
A burden hangs upon my soul,
And reason dare not urge control
Above a grief that will not speak.

For list'ning to the water's moan,
And gazing on the dark'ning scene,
Remembering days that once have been,
I strangely feel myself alone.

Alone ! the whole world stands apart,
I know not why I breathe and live,
And call on earth and air to give
Some answer to my restless heart.

A terror creeps thro' all my frame,
And doubts that gnaw the faith within,
Uprise and urge their ceaseless din,
Demanding why or what I am.

Shame on these shadows : Soul be still,
And listen to the voice sublime,
Replying thro' all space and time,
—" Thou art the creature of my will ;

" I gave thee life—'twas mine to give,
I gave thee life because I lov'd,
—Be patient then till thou hast prov'd
How love can make it bliss to live."

THE RILL.

SWIFTER and ever swifter, gliding with noiseless
speed

Under the drooping willows, over the rush and
reed,

Under the waving shadows, over the pebbles gray,
The hasty streamlet issues into the light of day,
Then with a laughing murmur forth from the
darkness sped,

Scattering foam it dashes down from its rocky bed,
Into the clear blue ether the cloudlike incense flies
As onward, for ever onward its busy current hies :
The tall trees cluster round it, the light bridge
spans it o'er,

And the merry children gambol upon its rugged
shore:

Under the fallen pollard, over the tangled weed,
Forward thro' rock and hollow, forward thro' moor
and mead,

Till gathering strength and swiftmess, its restless
ripples glide

With a murmuring sound of pleasure into the
silver tide.

—Then who can trace beneath those waters still
The merry music of that laughing rill?

A HAPPY child whose gentle thoughts
Like flow'rs that waken into bloom,
Are of the sunshine, fearless sports
Among the shadows of the tomb.

And thus a heart at ease can play
With sorrow's strangest images,
And feed with fancies of decay
The luxury of happiness.

But when across its April skies
The thick'ning shadows sweep again,
When grief has dropp'd her thin disguise,
Ah ! who will sport with sorrow then ?

DAYBREAK.

Fly shadows, fly,
The morn is near,
In yonder sky
Her golden feet appear ;
She comes in regal state
For whom we watch and wake,
Now from the heaven's gate
Fly shadows, fly,
And let the morning break !

Long have we tarried since the set of sun,
Long have we watched the toiling pace of night ;
Now is her labour done,
She takes her flight,

And morning comes at last,
With blushing grace
And heav'nly face,
Her rosy mantle round about her cast.

O day ! how sweet
As shades depart,
Thy coming feet
To weary heart,
Night's phantoms vanish into air,
The fear, the doubt, the dull despair
Which trembled in the breast,
As birds within their rest,
That stir and flutter till the morning brings
Light to their dewy wings,
Then with glad voices rise
To chaunt their carol thro' the happy skies.

From softer climes the feet of spring advance
To strew the laughing earth with orient flowers,
And April waking from her wintry trance,
Thro' shade and sunshine leads the jovial hours.
Now fast and far across the swelling main
Borne on the balmy breeze the swallows come,
In tower or battlement to seek again
The wonted shelter of their ancient home.
Thus they return ; but not to me returns
The wasted sweetness of the vanished years.
Within my breast a silent sorrow burn
Too calm for passion, and too deep for tears :
The birds come back,—but oh ! what gale can bring
To withered leaves the freshness of the spring ?

In the deep calm of mountain solitudes
Where brooding Silence holds her endless reign,
Or in thick shadows of the pathless woods
At eve made vocal by the lone bird's strain,
The heart awhile withdrawn from meaner things,
From restless passion, and from sordid care,
Forgets her turmoil, and on tranquil wings
Mounts up to heav'n, and holds communion there.
Ah ! then deciphered by the light above.
On ev'ry leaf of nature's open book
We read the characters of perfect love,
Whether we gaze upon the limpid brook,
Or mark the flow'r unfolding as we pass,
Which smiles upon us from the dew-sprent grass.

SCENE NEAR GLENCOE.

THE racking clouds are whirled about the sky,
And through their fissures peep the dreamy stars,
Now dimly seen, now hiding, as the rain
Sweeps in a sudden fury o'er the heath,
Swelling the clamour of unnumbered rills
That wander moaning to the fitful blast
Across the barren moor. To right and left
Stretches the drear illimitable plain,
And far above, in awful outline trac'd,
(Guarding the lonely pass where Cona runs,)
Frown the dark summits of th' eternal hills.
Beneath them from a solitary hearth

Beams forth one light to cheer the trav'ler's way
Amid surrounding gloom.

O wondrous scene !

Where like a hermit, nature seems to hold
Uninterrupted converse with her God,—
How small a part of thee does man appear !

LOCH KATRINE.

ONCE seen and ever loved ! translucent lake,
Thou fairest mirror of the glowing skies,
On whose calm depths the stars with loving eyes
Delight to ponder,—let thine image break
In some sweet vision on my spirit now,
That I may see in perfect tints and true,
(Tho' long alas ! conceal'd from outward view,) Thy peaceful shores, thy guardian mountain's brow.
When the first rays of Hesper's lamp are borne
In rippling beams across thy waters blue,
While o'er the lonely height of Benvenue
The pale young moon uplifts her crystal horn,
Then haunt my rest,—nor will thy beauties seem
The mere delusions of a passing dream.

SUNSET AMONG THE HEBRIDES.

AMONG the Western isles dies out the day,
Like molten gold the sleeping waters lie,
And ev'ry wave that breaks along the bay
Gives back the colours of the gorgeous sky.
From crag to crag on Morven's lonely strand,
From Staffa's columns, and Iona's fane
The red light flashes, and a viewless hand
On far Ben-Nevis fires the beacon-train.
Still on her lonely brow the snow-wreath lingers
Stern Winter's gauntlet flung for ever there,
Mocking the melting touch of Autumn's fingers,
And the soft wooing of the summer air ;
This moment flushing in the rosy light,
The next a ghost amid the shades of night.

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